

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 10 and 12-23 are pending, Claims 13-17 having previously been withdrawn from consideration, Claims 7-9 and 11 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and Claims 10 and 12 having been amended by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action Claims 7-9 and 11 were rejected as being anticipated by Inoue (U.S. Patent No. 6,874,017); and Claims 18-23 as well as Claims 10 and 12 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the identification of allowable subject matter.

In reply, Claims 7-9 and 11 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to seek protection for Claims 7-9 and 11 in one or more continuation-type applications. Claims 10 and 12 have been amended to incorporate the subject matter from the claims from which they depend. Therefore, it is believed that amended Claims 10 and 12 patentably define over the asserted prior art.

Consequently, in view of the indication of allowable subject matter and in light of the amendments made to the rejected claims, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 10, 12 and 18-23 patentably defines over the asserted prior art. The present

application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

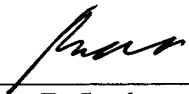
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